

## BRADSHAW-HARQUAHALA PLANNING AREA SCOPING COMMENTS

11/06/02

The Friends of the Agua Fria River Basin represent the majority of the citizens of Yavapai County and elsewhere in the state. The message from the public has been loud and clear at the scoping meetings, in the news reports (see attached clippings 1-4) and in letters and comments-**REMOVE THE 17,000+ ACRES OF BLM PUBLIC LANDS LOCATED NEAR DEWEY, HUMBOLDT AND MAYER IN YAVAPAI COUNTY FROM THE BLM'S DISPOSAL LIST IN THE NEW LAND USE PLAN (RMP)**. The people want their public lands kept public not exchanged for development. The Yavapai County Board of Supervisors agreed with the people when they opposed the initial exchange proposal (see attached clippings and letters #5-10), and went on to rezone these lands.

If the 17,000+ acres are disposed of the citizens of this state will lose the largest "**chunk**" of lands and pretty much the **only** BLM lands from Show Low, west past Prescott and north to the Utah border (Paria Canyon area). Disposing of these lands would definitely not be in the "best interest of the public".

Th BLM's mission is to "**sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations**" (see attached #11). Also, it states "**Public lands in the Phoenix Field Office are managed for multiple use and provide diverse recreational opportunities, mining, wildlife habitat, grazing, and wilderness...**" (see attached #12 and 13). How can this be achieved if the 17,000+ acres are exchanged for development which will strip the land bare of all vegetation and wildlife and deplete an already low water table? Once all of this is gone, it is gone **FOREVER!** How can disposing of these public lands create recreational opportunities, preserve the health of the land, preserve the archeological ruins, protect wildlife, etc.? What about the short and long term impacts on the environment and on the community (ie.-riparian vegetation, wildlife, archeological ruins, water, traffic, loss of open space, pollution, etc.)?

The Agua Fria River and its tributaries run through most of the 17,000+ acres and continues south through the Agua Fria National Monument. Disposal of these lands for development will adversely affect the flow of the Agua Fria River through the national monument and beyond.

I also have attached a copy of my NLCS scoping comments. The concerns I had with the initial exchange proposal still apply and explain all the reasons for keeping our public lands public.

In closing, I would like to emphasize again that the removal of the 17,000+ acres in Yavapai County would be in the "**best interest of the public**". I hope the BLM has heard the voices of the people of this state and will follow through with the removal of the 17,000+ acres of public land from the disposal list in the BLM's new land use plan (RMP).

Sincerely,

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